

AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
VIGO COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD

Monday, February 16, 1970 at 8:00 p.m.
Emeline Fairbanks Memorial Library

- I. Roll Call.
- II. Approval of Minutes.
- III. Statements from the Audience.

Statements from the audience will be referred to the Committee of the Whole of the Library Board.

Mr. Miller's remarks are on the tape, as per transcript

IV. Presentation by Mr. Ewing Miller:

Mr. Miller of Ewing Miller Associates will give an analysis of what's happening in downtown Terre Haute and will present a color-coded map to the Library as an aid in long-range planning for Library development.

- V. Report of Director.
- VI. Report on USOE Institute, "Improving Public Library Services for the Inner City Disadvantaged," by VCPL Participants Harmon Boyd and Fletcher "Bill" Gates.
- VII. Unfinished Business:
 - A. Recommendation on selection of bindery firm -- Mrs. Martin.
 - B. Report from Site Selection Committee.
 - C. _____
- VIII. Second Call for Statements from the Audience.
- IX. Suggestions from the Board for Staff Action or Study.
- X. Approval of Bills.

A motion for approval of bills paid January 26, 1970, and payrolls of January 23 and February 10, 1970.
- XI. Date and Place of Next Meeting:

March 16, 1970, Emeline Fairbanks Memorial Library.
- XII. Adjournment.

REFERENCE
DO NOT CIRCULATE

TRANSCRIPTION FROM CASSETTE TAPE OF REMARKS

BY MR. EWING MILLER AT LIBRARY BOARD

MEETING, FEBRUARY 16, 1970

We prepared this map last December for a talk to a group that we invited down to the office following the announcement that the multi-purpose center, or as it now has become known, the Civic Amphitheatre Complex (Mr. Hulman's gift to ISU and the city) was announced. It is located in the area between 8th and 9th Street, north of Cherry on an undetermined bit of land that got exceedingly large when it was published in the newspaper, and if it ever gets to be that size, it will be after a long number of years. The program for this building is just being written now. The architects for this project are St. Louis specialists in large-scale open-span amphitheatre work. We are working in conjunction with them as master planners for the University.

The area outlined by this blue square is conceived in the University's plan as their present limits. Now this is sort of the academic residential area. 1 A up here, which is also in blue, is the river bottom area that the University purchased and which we are just beginning to develop as a recreation site. It was the easiest way that the University could get a lot of acreage for its students without really destroying major areas. You can see it would take all this space up in here to be equivalent to it. We have some immediate problems in this. In case you are interested, the Corps of Engineers has control over what happens to the flood

plan. And we have to negotiate with the Corps as to how much can be taken out of the flood plain. We thought it was fairly simple, that we could just erect a dike and fill in the land and then we made the terrible error of bringing in a geographer, and he told us all the things that happen with seepage and percolation. That sort of shot down our levee idea, so we have other problems of pumping stations and things down in here now. This will be the major recreation area and, as you can see, this goes several blocks north of what is the new Penn Central railroad tracks. This primarily will be parking up in this area, and the academic residential area will exist south of the Penn Central tracks.

tion: Is that Locust on the north?

Yes, that is Locust Street. 4 and 4 A are the defined urban renewal projects. You will have to understand this is sort of a generalized graphic, and 4 A is the one that has been accomplished down in here. And 3 is the south residential section and 3 A is our designation for the north residential section. The reason for this dotted line around here is to outline for the county and for the city and for those interested participants to whom we were presenting this, that this is what we considered to be the critical area of the center of Terre Haute that needs to be immediately studied in terms of master planning so that we can get a proper set not location because location has been fairly well chosen but a proper set of servicing arterials to this multi-service center. We really can't touch that unless we

begin touching all these other variables.

One is the possibility of this post office location, although just coming out of Washington just two days ago, this location is possibly just a bit up in the air, and this is always the difficulty with trying to look into a crystal ball, I think, as far as saying where is the future going to be in Terre Haute. You always have these things that keep shifting or changing and consequently planning is always a very viable thing that has to be almost continuous. We have the possibility of the fire station that the Mayor has discussed, and presumably this has been located in terms of the consulting insurance people for this major station area that would serve a network north, south and east.

The library site, the one that you are considering, is here (at Wiley). The potential that there would be some space on south Third Street, which probably is quite academic at this point, and then the major problems that we are facing at both our north and south hospitals with parking and access for services and emergency vehicles and such.

Now, we are fairly well certain that we are going to have an overpass on 9th Street, from all that I read, anyway, and evidently the overpass on 3rd Street has been given a higher priority by the state and I think probably that would come along relatively soon. It is going to be interesting for Terre Haute to see what happens to the extensions of 41 north and south when

the studies really begin, because I have the feeling, since I 70 has passed us to the south, if this major north-south line is going to work, the main road is going to have to come down west of town and a cross-over be placed on down south, which would help relieve some of the external traffic from 3rd Street which is just horrendous anymore. I am amazed at how many people suddenly own automobiles over just two years ago. I have to turn out on this road coming into town, and at 7:30 in the morning you can hardly get a place to break in.

Terre Haute is very fortunate in the sense that it is a grid city and that it has equal and easy access from all of its sides. Unlike Evansville, for example, which is down in a pocket, and you can't get down into that pocket easily. It certainly is the thing that has reinforced us as a commercial center, because people can easily come in from all directions and find parking. And as long as we are on that subject, I think it is nice to go back in history a little bit. When they were doing this first area of urban renewal down here it was a great concern to the city council at that time that nothing be done that would encourage the mercantile area moving off Wabash Avenue, which was the heavy taxation district, and moving down along 3rd Street. So they put very prohibitive codes down here [on south 3rd] that only allowed two and three-story buildings, a little bit of commercial property at front and, as we know, quite a bit of public housing at the back to assure that it

would remain sort of small commercial and housing. But, as you also know, you really can't stop a trend or stop anything, so commercial firms just popped over the south 3rd Street area and went down to Honey Creek Square. Now it is outside the city and we have no taxation on it whatsoever. You can steer and manipulate and reinforce, but you really can't force a city into a certain growth pattern under our concept of free enterprise, because people have too many alternatives.

This is the thing that in talking to you disturbs me a little bit about trying to forecast anything, because I really don't know what is going to happen to this number 2, what's known as the Central Business District (or in planning terms they shorten it to the CBD referred to so much). I have been very disappointed over a ten-year period at the lack of exchange of property into more viable hands. Joe Cloutier says that I stole his words, and I don't remember that he was the first to say it, but Wabash Avenue is really in the hands of widows and orphans. These are trusts that have been set up many years ago or they are in the hands of very old people, and I don't mean that in a demeaning way; this is just a fact of life, and oftentimes in critical spots there isn't money to put into those buildings because people have been living off them, and they have only produced what has been a reasonable income, so there has been no reinvestment, and yet the value that they think the property has is not there for anyone else, you see.

Bar, there are a lot of things you are going to have to

Consequently, one of the main corners of 7th and Wabash is a parking lot. This is a piece of land that is in a trust and it is in a life estate, which makes it even more complex with many errors if certain things should happen. To sell it is difficult, and to revitalize it...! Evidently the owners don't have the interest in it or the faith in the area, and I don't know as I would if I had the property at that point.

I am hoping that this civic center will provide the lever for us all as citizens of Vigo County and really in a broader sense of a much bigger area because this is going to provide us with an auditorium that will bring in potential conventions, I would presume. It will provide us with the kinds of sports and theatrical spectacles that will take people from a great number of miles around. When they do this, they buy food and they buy gasoline and they do other things that are a direct economic benefit to the community. This thing is only going to be as good as the planning that goes on around it to get people into it and to get people out of it with convenience.

lon:

What kind of parking have they figured on?

They really haven't decided this in total numbers, but if you were able, if you had the money to do it today, you probably ought to provide for 4,000 automobiles. Now this is 40 acres. Either stack it or spread it out; it is still 40 acres. Figuring there is going to be 12,000 seats and you get about three people to the car, there are a lot of things you are going to have to

take into consideration. At most, for 80 per cent of the things that go on there you are probably going to have 2,000 - 3,000 kids, so this is going to lower the adults to 10,000. We do have 1,500 parking places on our streets, and people for specialized things like this will walk further than they will for a commercial buy. So we won't need these 4,000 automobile spaces right away, but we certainly are going to need a thousand.

on: Would this kind of facility afford the parking ramps like, for instance, at St. Louis at the ball park?

That is hard for me to answer, and let me give you the reasons why. For the most part, our most expensive land anymore in the downtown area (don't shoot me down on a specific, but I am talking about a generality) runs about \$4 a square foot for some of the best land. Am I fairly secure in saying that? A ramp garage today--Bob (Miller), you have been into this more than I have recently--is what, up to about \$6, so you already in a ramp have \$2 more per square foot. And now, is it possible to get ten acres directly surrounding the amphitheatre? Well, yes it is, except there are other factors when you start buying ten acres. You've got good will, interruption of business, and all of these other things. Those people haven't even been approached, I don't think, to find out what the totals are. There is going to be a cost-benefit study that will go on all during design, but whether you pay \$4 or whether you pay \$6 or whether you end up paying \$10, it really doesn't matter. Whatever parking is built for this, it is going to be

very foolish if we don't integrate it so it can be used by the downtown and by other facilities at the same time.

There is, I think, a determination that has to be made right now between the forces of disagreement as to whether this R-40 project is going to go through, whether we are going to have all our traffic down Cherry and all our traffic up Ohio with Wabash Avenue stopping at 3rd Street as is proposed on the R-40 plan. If that is the case, then it is entirely possible that we may want to block this off up here and really make this into a walking mall, with streets going through this way--because of the railroad primarily, and the University in a much more minor position--would like to block off 4th and 5th and 6th. I think the railroad is talking but the University is not quite so concerned about 6th. 7th would remain open, and then 8th has to be blocked off by the potential location. So that puts the burden on 9th with its overpass and that means that 9th is going to have to become two-way, and if this happens we had better be studying what happens down here with the fire station or there is going to be the worst tie-up there some day that you have ever seen.

That is why this week we are going to be trying to work out with the Planning Commission a proposal for our firm to make a major study of the area that you see outlined in red. And, of course, your library location, if that could be taken out of the variable list by that time and put into something that is fairly secure, would

be of great benefit. I have a friend in Ft. Wayne who designed a new library up there. We work rather closely with him, and I was meeting with him in Atlantic City. I mentioned the problem of our library coming up, and I said with all the library work you have done what would you say is the main criteria for a site, and he said, "Well, look at it in the way that you would look at any commercial site. It has to have access; it has to get people into it easily and away from it easily; it has to have parking when you get there and it has to have some exposure because, after all, you are selling a service. You are selling a product." If you look at it in those terms, why, I think that there are a number of locations in town that would be good for you and I think it is a case of what the cost-benefit is on the land that is coming to you. It is as simple as that. Bob is more of a specialist in this area of libraries, having just finished up the design on several.

In covering what our library needs, we were talking earlier tonight, and Bob said, "Well, they don't have to have a sign like Meis." Nevertheless you have to have all the other commercial things going for you to make the library usable. This is, after all, why you are building a new one.

If I were to start into a community and had all the resources at my command, I suppose, for choosing sites, I would try to do what we are trying to do at the state level on hospital planning now, and this is find out

points of origin, frequency that the people come from those places, not whether you are putting a thing in the centroid by population, but whether you are putting it in the centroid by time-space distances. Just by our own intuitive processes without having this kind of information, I should think that anyplace in here is alright, provided that you are on an arterial and provided that the city and the county is willing to put enough into the study of how we make better traffic flow and then implement it. I think you are fairly safe in any number of these centroid areas because the city has not really shifted that much, and that is our first big clue: that we have had such good access from all sides, that we stay fairly solid and even our shopping centers haven't gone way out. They are fairly peripheral shopping centers, which means they are still centroid-type shopping areas. I have great concern for these areas (residential from Locust to Margaret and east of 8th?). This area is fairly run down, but on the other hand there is still some good housing up in here that could be reinforced. With the fraternities coming off 6th Street eventually and going up into this area, which is the plan, I think we need to be reinforcing this south area right now or we are going to have another slum area in a very short period of time. To do that with the commonplace usage of the automobile today, you have to make bigger blocks. Now, the reason we extended the area for study all the way out to 13th is that it is a natural arterial in this

town. Any logical thinking person can look at that and realize that 13th runs from clear under I 70--it is one of the few that runs under I 70--and goes all the way out north, and it is the widest street from the river out, with the exception of 3rd Street. If we took the parking off it for the entire length, we could have a 50 mile-an-hour arterial on that street. I realize that the emotions involved of the people who live on that street are going to be fairly high when this is suggested; but nevertheless, the town does have to start to proceed with some logic to start solving some of its problems.

I think that we have some very natural ones (streets). Certainly the one coming down along St. Anthony's should be developed if only to serve this great need down through here. They (St. Anthony's) are beginning to pick up parking but they have some immediate problems with their hospital on fire control. They are going to have to do some rather dramatic things here over the next ten years. We all know what is happening up north when they (Union Hospital) faced up to the same problems and the major program that they are working on. Tonight I went up there to see my Mother, and it is almost impossible to get up 8th Street because people insist on parking where they are not supposed to, mainly because they have taken parking just off one side, and I think people get confused, to give them the benefit of the doubt. It needs to be widened and it needs all the parking taken off of it. When you do this, when you wiggle one hierarchy,

why it wiggles all the other hierarchies, you know. So you can't do this without saying "where are people going to park" and "how are we going to get service to them" and "when are we going to force the railroad to tell us exactly what they are going to do with this roadbed so we can get another overpass on 13th Street". You can't force the railroad to do anything until you show them a solid plan that is going to give them some assurance that you are doing things too.

The greatest problem with planning, I suppose, is that no one ever gets around to implementing it, and we have had a great number of plans in this town that have been stuffed away in drawers. We have been asked (if this becomes a proposal that is acceptable to the Area Planning Commission for the study of this area), we have been asked to write into the contract the methods of implementing. A private consulting firm can only do so much. We can study taxation and we can say here are methods which you can utilize within the structure of taxation to get these things done. We can give them a capital funds expenditure program. We certainly have all the available concessions right up here in the University to help do some of these things, but in the final analysis it comes down to a vote, and the elected officials have to put it through. So, you can pave the way, but it takes the strength and backing of your government.

I think that if we can make this kind of unilateral decision on the library so that we can begin to define

this area, this will be even more convincing. Ohio would be one of the arterials that would be under study. Poplar certainly would be, but it has a very bad jog in it and this would have to be thought through on a long term scale. 7th Street is going to remain open all the way, but will become more localized with 9th Street, so there has to be feeders down from 9th Street then to get to an area like this, so there are some problems connected with it. These are not insurmountable problems, but it is just that you have to make your decision where you are going to go and then try to tailor the site as best you can to solving some of these things.

The University plan, I think, is gelling up very nicely, because we have established strong pedestrian ways along 4th Street, 6th Street, and 8th Street, and we want these to feed right down into this yellow area (the CBD) and continue right on through so that the University doesn't become an isolated block in the middle of town. It is really going to be the core of the city center, and the government services. Outside of the type of (this is one of the dangerous predictions because some little thing could happen in a year's period that would change the whole complexion of things) but as we are going now, and as we have seen other cities go, the type of commerce that will remain downtown, other than services will be those things that will serve a captive population of about 20,000 people, because this is where the University will eventually end up--between 20,000 and 25,000.

Other than that, the big stores that really don't serve this market are going to be out in your peripheral shopping centers. Now, this is going to take some time for it to happen. It is not going to happen overnight, but we have already begun to see it with Montgomery Wards, and Sears Roebuck, and with Aldens quitting. If the town starts turning grey and short of breath, you will think that any minute you had better prepare yourself for the worst. I think that there will be a rejuvenation of different kinds of shops down in here, and we are beginning to see that, too. Some of those little psychedelic places are just as cute and as lively as they can be, and have been a real addition to main street. The centroid of main street has really shifted right now, because of the students, to 6th Street.

Generally, I think that this sort of sums up the heart of the community. I don't think there is anything wrong with your Wiley site in any way. I do think that any site that you would choose would have some problems and it is going to have to be a community-solved problem, not a library-solved problem. The property on south 3rd Street only had the advantage possibly at this point in time, that it had easier access from the north and south and was on a main arterial. Without knowing what is going to happen to it under this widening and four laning of 41 and 63 in several years, if the state continues to run it down through the town it could become a very difficult site because of the amount of traffic that

would above ground, and even above ground it is more expensive than buying an equivalent space on grade.

You may need (parking for) only 100 cars. I have no way of knowing. But let's just assume that you only need 100 cars. This is an acre. You can certainly find an acre much cheaper in this area than not. Now, if you need ten acres, why then it becomes a different kind of cost-benefit analysis. Now, as far as the civic center goes, the basement is already being used, and you can't go too far in this town until you get into water. So, you have a limit as to how far you can go. Again, surface parking up in this area, because everything east of 8th Street is in fairly run down condition with a few exceptions, I am sure that this would come out cheaper than trying to put ramps on it. I think oftentimes where ramps come into play is when your land costs go up or where just for the aesthetic purposes it is desirable to hide the cars. Then you can go underground to maintain an open space at grade level and sometimes if land costs are not sufficiently high you can justify on the grounds that many cars parked at grade are aesthetically objectionable.

I think in all honesty that for a civic center the people will have the desire to go there because they want to see something special and, as I said before, they will walk further. We also have the other problem that if we do want to put our parking so that it supports what is pretty much of a rifle-shot type of central business district that is not square, then we are going to have

to distribute this ground surface parking down Ohio and down Cherry Street, so that we can feed into a number of these pedestrian ways, if we are going to make the whole thing viable. And the consideration of any planning shouldn't be totally alone for the multi-purpose center. It ought to be on how do we reinforce and improve and connect and do everything for this whole town, anymore than it should be entirely for the library. These are just problems in the whole matrix of problems that need to be solved. The thing that really worries me is the fire station. I can see our headquarters unit completely bottled up in all directions if we don't get to it and really think it out because this is going to be a tremendous traffic generator if that (the new post office) goes up in there. We are going to have trucks coming off I 70 way up into town and they have to be gotten there and taken off.